A/AC.240/1995/WG/6
22 May 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE
FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
UNITED NATIONS
Drafting Group
Sixteenth meeting
25 May 1995

COMMEMORATION OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Draft declaration (rolling text 1) submitted by the Chairman

1. We, the Heads of State, Heads of Government and Heads of Delegation, gathered at United Nations Headquarters to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations:

- Acknowledge the unique presence in the world of the United Nations and its achievements

- Express our gratitude to all men and women who have made the United Nations possible

- Renew our commitments to the Charter of the United Nations, and

- Are determined to send the United Nations into the twenty-first century invigorated and resolved to promote peace, development, justice and equality so that there will be a better life for and understanding between the peoples of the world.

2. The Charter of the United Nations was forged 50 years ago, following the untold sorrow caused by two world wars. It remains a gifted document giving expression to the common values and aspirations of humankind.

3. The United Nations has often been put severely to the tests of conflict and great and unpredicted change. Yet it has survived, grown and achieved much for people all over the world. It has, through the decolonization process, ensured to hundreds of millions of human beings one of the most fundamental rights - self-determination. It has helped to shape the very structure of international relations in the modern age.

4. We solemnly reaffirm the purposes and principles of the United Nations, enshrined in its Charter, and we pledge our full support to the United Nations in any action it takes in accordance with its Charter.

5. Today's world is very different from that of 50 years ago. It is vastly more diverse, yet vastly more interdependent. In addition, the speed and extent of contemporary change points to a future of even greater challenge and complexity. Our opportunity to shape that future creatively has been expanded by the end of the cold war.

6. The end of that confrontation has increased expectations that the United Nations will address, effectively, issues of common global concern and interest.

7. For these reasons, and because of the size and importance of the challenges that clearly lie ahead, we will need to revitalize and strengthen the United Nations itself, if we are to ensure that it serves the needs of the world's people, the people in whose name it was established.

8. The closing years of the first half century of the United Nations have seen a significant expansion in the direct engagement of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security. That engagement has become more complex, particularly with respect to the provision of humanitarian assistance. This change, which must be expected to remain a feature of the years ahead, requires new approaches to the role and potential of the United Nations.

9. To meet this challenge and on the basis of the common and fundamental recognition that action to secure global peace, security and stability will be futile unless the economic and social needs of people as well as States are addressed, we are determined to:

- Promote understanding of the complex nature of contemporary threats to international peace and security, including non-military threats

- Encourage and secure friendly relations between peoples with different political, cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds

- Fully utilize the capabilities of the United Nations in the field of pacific settlement of disputes

- Enhance greatly the capability of the United Nations in conflict prevention and in preventive diplomacy

- Enhance the role of the United Nations in and our national, regional and multilateral efforts in all forms of arms control and disarmament, and strive to realize our common vision of a world free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction

- Act together to defeat the threats to States posed by the international narcotics and clandestine arms trades and international criminality

- Increase significantly the consultation and cooperation between regional arrangements or agencies in the maintenance of international peace and security.

10. Given the deepening and growing interdependence of nations and peoples, we are fully conscious of the fact that a dynamic, vigorous and fair international economic environment is essential for international peace, security, stability and the well-being of the human family.

11. The United Nations has played an important role in the provision of often life-saving assistance to women, men and children around the world. But the pledge recorded in the Charter that all Members of the United Nations will take joint and separate action in cooperation with the Organization for the achievement of higher standards of living, full employment and conditions of economic and social progress and development has, in too many respects, not been fulfilled.

12. The need for action in these fields has never been more urgent. Today one fifth of the world's people live in abject poverty. This and related facts concerning women, children, the environment, communicable diseases and narcotics, demand our long-term attention and, for that purpose, that we enter into unprecedented measures of international cooperation.

13. In order to meet common development challenges, the United Nations has convened in the last five years a number of specifically focused global conferences. As a result, a consensus has emerged on a concept of people-centred sustainable development. At the core of this concept is the recognition of the human person as the central subject of development.

14. In this context, we are convinced that democracy and the promotion and protection of all human rights, including the right to development, are indispensable foundations for development and that effective development policies require the participation of all sectors of society.

15. Accordingly, we commit ourselves, in fulfilment of the right to development to:

- The promotion of an open framework for trade, investment and technology transfer, as well as enhanced cooperation in the areas of debt and finance for development, as critical conditions for sustained economic growth. Particular attention should be given to national and international action to enhance the benefits of the process of globalization for all countries and to avoid the marginalization from the world economy of the least developed countries, in particular those of Africa

- Reinvigorating the dialogue between the developed and developing countries on all development issues in response to the imperatives of mutual benefit and interest, genuine interdependence and shared responsibility

- Continuing efforts to develop an open, rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory multilateral trading system in order to promote growth and development and the free movement of factors of production

- The promotion of social development through decisive national and international action aimed at the eradication of poverty and the promotion of full employment and social integration. The empowerment of women should be recognized as being central to all efforts to achieve development

- Recognizing that environmental sustainability constitutes an integral part of the development process, promote actions to reduce and eliminate unsustainable patterns of production and consumption and policies designed in order to meet the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs

- Improving the effectiveness of the United Nations system for development, especially in the field.

16. We recognize that all human rights derive from the dignity and worth inherent in the human person and that the human person is the central subject of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

17. While the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical backgrounds must be borne in mind, it is the duty of all States, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms. We will therefore:

- Promote and encourage adherence to human rights and fundamental freedoms as the birthright of all human beings

- Take concerted action towards the full realization of the rights of women, including with respect to their education, literacy and access to work on fair terms

- Protect the rights of the child

18. The Charter of the United Nations has provided a framework for the promotion of international law, through the fulfilment of its purposes and principles. The development of international law by the United Nations has played a crucial role in building the structure of modern international relations. This work must be pursued with renewed determination, given the developments under way in technology, transport, information and resource-related fields, as well as the growing complexity of the work of the United Nations in humanitarian, refugee and peace operations.

19. We commit ourselves to:

- The further progressive development of means of ensuring compliance with international law in order to promote economic and social progress and better standards of living in larger freedom and

universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms

- The building and maintenance of fair and just societies, in which all people are able to participate

- The promotion of acceptance of and respect for the principles of international law

- Encouraging universal ratification of existing multilateral treaties and respect for the obligations arising from them.

20. We recognize that the global nature of our world and the central concept of people-centred sustainable development requires that our common work, if it is to be successful, requires that participation in it be open to all actors - governmental, non-governmental and the private sector. We will facilitate such participation.

21. Equally, a healthy United Nations needs adequate resources. We commit ourselves to meeting in full and on time our financial obligations to the United Nations system and to providing that system with adequate budgets. It must be understood that the latter requires the secretariats of the United Nations system to improve significantly their efficiency and effectiveness. This will, in turn, require them to pursue restructuring vigorously.

22. Our resolve on this historic occasion is clear. The commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations must be seized as an opportunity to redirect it to greater service of the human family, especially to its suffering members. This is the practical and moral challenge of our time. Our obligation to this end is found in the Charter. The need for it is manifest in the condition of humankind. We will give to the twenty-first century a United Nations which serves both that human family and peace.